Twenty-two American Folk Tunes

Arranged for Piano
Elementary Grades

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FOREWORD

In writing these pieces, there were two objectives:

(a) to acquaint the piano student with at least a small part of the traditional (i.e., "folk") music of his own country, and to give this to him in a form which can be used at the same time for piano practice.

(b) to present this music in an idiom savoring as much as possible of the contemporary, preferring a bareness rather than a richness of style, and accustoming the student's ear to a freer use of the fifth, fourth, seventh, and second intervals so abundantly used in most contemporary music. (Curiously enough, there is part-singing widespread throughout the southeastern states, and has been for the past hundred years, which reveals in these characteristics of "modern" music.)

The melodies around which these pieces have been built are traditional American melodies. There are thousands more, just as good and just as alive. It is the belief of this composer that, just as the child becomes acquainted with his own home environment before experiencing the more varied contacts of school and community, so should the music student be given the rich musical heritage of his own country as a basis upon which to build his experience of the folk and art music of other countries.

It is to be stressed that these little pieces have been written chiefly as piano pieces. The singing of them is, of course, highly important; it can be left to the instructor, whether each piece is learned first as a song. To this end, as well as to add flavor, a few verses of each song have been included, and the pieces so constructed that they can be used as accompaniments on occasion. But they have been designed to serve as well for piano practice.

1938
Washington, D.C.
PREFACE

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I would suggest including only three or four of the many verses of each song.

These melodies have been taken from the following collections (and nothing but the melody has been used, the arrangements being entirely my own):

- American Ballads and Folksongs
- Sandburg, Songbag
- Sharpe, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians
- Innsford, Thirty One Songs
I believe very strongly that, just as the child becomes acquainted with his own home environment before experiencing the more varied aspects of school and community, so should he become acquainted with the folk music and music of his own country as a firm basis upon which to build his experience of the folk and art music of other countries. There are thousands of traditional American melodies, fine, strong, simple, a rich musical heritage. And I have often remarked how children who sing laconically or not at all music which is given them to sing in school rooms and which is foreign to them, will become lively and enthusiastic participants as soon as the American folk song, familiar in spirit and subject, is introduced.
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London's Bridge

Not fast

London's Bridge is a-burnin' down, O girls remember me, London's

Bridge is a-burnin' down for the prettiest girl I know, I know.
LONDON'S BRIDGE

London's bridge is a-burning down,
O girls remember me.
London's bridge is a-burning down
For the prettiest girl I know.

Choose the one as we march around,
O girls remember me.
Choose the one as we march around,
Of the prettiest girl I know.

Take her by the right hand,
O girls remember me,
Take her by the right hand
For the prettiest girl I know.

And tell her how you love her,
I girls remember me
And tell her how you love her;
For the prettiest girl I know.

Hug her neat and kiss her sweet,
O girls remember me
Hug her neat and kiss her sweet
For the prettiest girl I know.
The Three Ravens

Not too fast

mf Three old crows sat on a tree; just as black as crows could be.

Poor old crow, poor old crow, just as black as crow could be. The

mf Old he-crow says to his mate, "What shall we do for meat to eat?"

Poor old crow, poor old crow, just as black as crow could be.
I ride an old Paint.

With Vigor

I ride an old Paint, I lead an old Dan; I'm goin' to Montana just to

throw the Hoof; an', they feed in the coulter, they water in the draw. Their

tails are all matted, their backs are all raw; Ride a-round, little dogies, ride a-

round 'em slow; For the fiery and snuffy are rarin' to go.
The Gray Goose

Firmly

Well, last Monday morning, Loud, Loud, Loud, Well, last

Monday morning, Loud, Loud, Loud,

G. SCHIRMER
ROYAL BRAND
No. 60-19 Scores
THE GRAY GOOSE

Well, last Monday morning,
Lard, Lard, Lard,
Well, last Monday morning,
Lard, Lard, Lard,

My daddy went a-hunting,
Lard, Lard, Lard,
My daddy went a-hunting,
Lard, Lard, Lard,

Hunting for the gray goose, etc.,
And he went to the big wood, etc.,
And he took along his gun, etc.,
And the hound dog he went too,

Hound dog begin to whining,
Along come a gray goose,

Well, up to his shoulder,
And ram back the hammer,
And pull on the trigger,
And the gun went booz-leo
Down he come a-falling,
He was six weeks falling,
And he put him on the wagon,
And he take him to the white house.

Our wife and my wife,
They'll give a feather picking;
He was six weeks picking,
And they pu him a-cooking;
He was six weeks cooking,
And they put him on the table.

And the fork wouldn't stick him.
Well, they threw him in the hog-pen,
And the hogs couldn't eat him,
Well, he broke the old saw's jawsone,
So they took him to the sawmill,
And he broke the saw's teeth out,
And the last time I seen her
She was flying 'cross the ocean,
And a long strip of geelings.

And they all went "Quack, quack,"
Lard, Lard, Lard,
And they all went "Quack, quack,"
Lard, Lard, Lard.
Darby's Ram

Jaunty

As I went out to Darby all on a summer's day

I met the biggest ram, sir, that ever fed on hay.

Chorus

And he rambled, and he rambled till there

Butchers cut him down.
DARBY’S RAM

As I went out to Darby
All on a summer's day,
I met the biggest ram, sir, that ever fed on hay.
That ever fed on hay.

Chorus:
And he rambled
And he rambled
And he rambled,
Till those watchmen cut him down.

He had four feet to walk on,
He had four feet to stand,
And every one of his four feet,
They covered an acre of land.

This ram he had two horns sir,
They reached up to the moon,
A man went up in January,
And he didn’t come back till June.

The weel, that was on his back, sir,
It reached up to the sky,
The eagles built their nests there,
For I heard the little ones cry.
Cindy

Lightly

You wish I was an fly; She hangs her way down through every time my she

Chorus

Cindy, Cindy, get a long home, Cindy, Cindy, get a-long home, Cindy, Cindy,

I'll marry you some time!
CINDY

You ought to see my Cindy; she lives away down south,
She's so sweet the honey bees swarm around her mouth.

Chorus:
Get along home, Cindy, Cindy, get along home, Cindy, Cindy,
Get along home, Cindy, Cindy, I'll marry you sometime.

I wish I was an apple, a-hanging on a tree,
And every time my Cindy passed, she'd take a bite of me.

I went down to Cindy's house, did not go to stay,
But when I saw that pretty little girl I just couldn't go away.

She took me to the parlor, she cooled me with her fan,
She told me I'm the prettiest thing in the shape of mortal man.

She told me that she loved me, she called me sugar plum,
She threw her arms around me, I thought my time had come.

I wish I had a needle, as fine as I could sew,
I'd saw the girls to me coat tail and sew the road I'd go.

Cindy in the summer time, Cindy in the fall,
If it can't be Cindy all the time, it won't be Cindy at all.
Sweet Betsy from Pike

With humor

Don't you re-member sweet Betsy from Pike, who crossed the with

cresc. poco a poco

prielies with her lover Ike, with two yoke of cattle and

f

doog

descend

one spotted hog, a tall shanghai rooster and an old yaller

P
O don't you remember sweet Betsy from Pike
The crossed the wide prairies with her lover Ike,
With two yoke of cattle and one spotted hog
A tall, shaggy rooster and an old yellow dog.

The cattle ran off and the cattle all died;
The last piece of bacon that evening was fried.
Poor Ike got discouraged and Betsy got mad,
And the dog wagged his tail and looked wonderful sad.

The alkali desert was burning and bare,
And Isaac's soul shrank from the death that was there;
"Dear old Pike County, I'll go back to you"
Said Betsy "You'll go by yourself if you do.

They soon reached the desert where Betsy grew out,
And down in the sand she lay rolling about;
Then Ike in great terror looked on in surprise,
Saying, "Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eye.

Sweet Betsy got up in a great deal of pain,
And declared she'd go back to Pike County again;
Then Ike heaved a sigh and they kindly embraced
And traveled along with his own round her wrist.

They purled the wide rivers and crossed the tall prairies
And camped on the prairies for weeks upon weeks,
Starvation and cholera and hard work and slaughter,
They reached California spite of hell and high water.

One morning they climbed up a very high hill,
And with wonder looked down on old Placerville,
The shouted and said, as he cast his eyes down,
"Sweet Betsy, my darling, we've got to Hongtown."

Long Ike and sweet Betsy attended a dance,
Where Ike wore a pair of his Pike County pants,
Sweet Betsy was covered with ribbons and rings,
Quote Ike "You're an angel, but where are your wings?"
With Spirit

Groundhog

Shoulder up, gun call your dog, Shoulder up, gun call your dog, Away to the woods.

Catch a ground hog, Ground hog

Two in the cleft, one in the log, Two in the cleft, one in the log, Seed his nose, though I knew it was a hog, Ground hog.
Shoulder up your gun and call your dog,
Shoulder up your gun and call your dog,
Away to the woods to catch a ground hog,
Ground hog.

Two in the cleft and one in the leg,
Two in the cleft and one in the leg,
See'd his nose, thought I knew it was a hog.
Ground hog.

Children all around, they screamed and cried, etc.
Children all around, they screamed and cried,
They love a ground hog stewed and fried,
Ground hog.

Young comes Sally with a snigger and a grin,
Young comes Sally with a snigger and a grin,
Ground hog grease all over her chin,
Ground hog.